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**TOMORROW: Former Hollyoaks star Neil Toon returns to Southend with Legally Blonde**

# Travellers in Brussels to stave off evictions

By JON AUSTIN  
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TRAVELLERS arrived in Brussels to try and use the might of European laws to stop their eviction from Dale Farm.

A delegation of travellers from the camp held talks with Richard Howitt, the MEP for south Essex yesterday.

Patrick Egan, Daniel Gammell and William Egan called on Mr Howitt to use his influence to see if Basildon Council is breaching any European human rights legislation with its proposed up to £18million eviction of about 350 people from the illegal site at Crays Hill.

Mr Howitt has asked for the eviction to be raised with the human rights committee of the European Parliament to see if it complies with legislation to ensure the rights of all Roma and travellers across Europe are met by individual countries.

He said: "I am trying to help the situation at Dale Farm and it is my job to work at European level. I am inquiring if all international laws are being respected. I am not suggesting the council is breaching any laws, and it assures me it is not, but it is only right and proper these questions are raised."

Mr Howitt said his personal view was the eviction should be halted until alternative caravan pitches are found for all the families.

Patrick Egan owns the Dale Farm cottage, which gives the site its name, and is not facing eviction, although a number of his relatives are.



■ Meeting – Euro MP Richard Howitt with travellers Patrick Egan, Daniel Gammell and William Egan

He has previously been a spokesman for the site and went to Brussels as he spends part of the year living and working in France.

Meanwhile, Essex Police officers visited Dale Farm yesterday to

meet travellers. An Essex Police spokeswoman said: "We are meeting with residents to hear their concerns."

Council leader Tony Ball was also due to meet representatives of the

site yesterday. Candy Sheridan, a North Norfolk Lib Dem councillor and traveller, arranged the visit and was setting up an office at the site and helping families make homelessness applications.

## Sexual health clinics to move?

SEXUAL health clinics will be moved, if new proposals get the go-ahead.

Advice sessions are currently held at Basildon and Brentwood hospitals, as well as Wickford, Pitsea, Great Oaks, Grays, Corringham and Tilbury clinics.

Under the new plans, South West Essex Community Services would hold the same amount of clinics, but only in the two hospitals, Grays and Great Oaks.

Concerns have been raised this would mean youngsters having to travel to get advice.

One clinic worker, who didn't want to be named, said: "None of the youngsters who come in to my clinic have got the bus fare. These young boys are not going to buy condoms with their pocket money."

The staff member also raised fears about workers being made redundant, but Matthew Macdonald, from NHS South West Essex Community Services, said no members of staff would be out of work because they would be redeployed.

The health trust said there has been a 29.5 per cent reduction in teenage pregnancies in Thurrock and 18 per cent in Basildon from 2007 to 2009.

He said: "A consultation launched on July 7, will run until August 6.

## Got a story?

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